



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## MARK TWAIN'S PHILOSOPHY.<sup>1</sup>

Mark Twain wrote a book entitled *What is Man?* but he kept the fact a secret for it was not published until after his death. It was printed in New York at the De Vinne Press in an edition of two hundred and fifty copies, during July, 1906. Its copyright dates from the same year and it is prefaced under date of February, 1905, as follows:

The studies for these papers were begun twenty-five or twenty-seven years ago. The papers were written seven years ago. I have examined them once or twice per year since and found them satisfactory. I have just examined them again, and am still satisfied that they speak the truth.

Every thought in them has been thought (and accepted as unassailable truth) by millions upon millions of men—and concealed, kept private. Why did they not speak out? Because they dreaded (and could not bear) the disapproval of the people around them. Why have I not published? The same reason has restrained me, I think. I can find no other.

The book is published under Mark Twain's own name, Samuel Langhorne Clemens. This is significant, for here Mark Twain does not speak to us, but Mr. Clemens; not a humorist, but the man himself who has written under the pseudonym "Mark Twain." This book is not for our amusement, but for our instruction. Here our author does not mean to make jokes, he is serious. He is too serious

<sup>1</sup> Because the quotations from Mr. Clemens are the most important feature of this article, they are printed in large type while our own considerations and objections appear in more modest size. Thus indicating difference of authorship by difference in type we can dispense with the use of quotation marks in the main selections from Mark Twain.

to make any attempt at giving his treatment charm or pleasing form. How easy would it have been to treat the subject in the happy style of his unexcelled humor! He absolutely abstains from all jollity for to him the truth which he preaches is sad, very sad; he claims that man is a machine—nothing more.

The treatment of this subject is keen in argument but dull, in parts it is extremely dull, and dry in style. It is cast into the form of a monotonous conversation between an old man representing himself, Mr. Clemens, in his matured years, and a youth who is unwilling to recognize the truth. He says:

The Old Man and the Young Man had been conversing. The Old Man had asserted that the human being is merely a machine, and nothing more. The Young Man objected, and asked him to go into particulars and furnish his reason for his position.

A machine has no merit. An inferior machine—say one manufactured of stone—cannot help being inferior and a superior machine does not deserve credit for being better. The conversation continues:

Old Man. What could the stone engine do?

Young Man. Drive a sewing-machine, possibly—nothing more, perhaps.

O. M. Men would admire the other engine and rapturously praise it?

Y. M. Yes.

O. M. But not the stone one?

Y. M. No.

O. M. The merits of the metal machine would be far above those of the stone one.

Y. M. Of course.

O. M. Personal merits?

Y. M. Personal merits? How do you mean?

O. M. It would be personally entitled to the credit of its own performance?

Y. M. The engine? Certainly not.

O. M. Why not?

Y. M. Because its performance is not personal. It is a result of the law of its construction. It is not a merit that it does things which it is set to do—it can't help doing them.

O. M. And it is not a personal demerit in the stone machine that it does so little?

Y. M. Certainly not. It does no more and no less than the law of its make permits and compels it to do. There is nothing personal about it; it cannot choose. In this process of "working up to the matter" is it your idea to work up to the proposition that man and a machine are about the same thing, and that there is no personal merit in the performance of either?

O. M. Yes—but do not be offended; I am meaning no offense. What makes the grand difference between the stone engine and the steel one? Shall we call it training, education? Shall we call the stone engine a savage and the steel one a civilized man? The original rock contained the stuff of which the steel one was built—but along with it a lot of sulphur and stone and other obstructing inborn heredities, brought down from the old geologic ages—prejudices, let us call them. Prejudices which nothing within the rock itself had either power to remove or any desire to remove. Will you take note of that phrase?

Y. M. Yes. I have written it down: "Prejudices which nothing within the rock itself had either power to remove or any desire to remove." Go on.

O. M. Prejudices which must be removed by outside influences or not at all. Put that down.

Y. M. Very well: "Must be removed by outside influences or not at all." Go on.

O. M. The iron's prejudice against ridding itself of the cumbering rock. To make it more exact, the iron's absolute indifference as to whether the rock be removed or not. Then comes the outside influence and grinds the rock to

powder and sets the ore free. The iron in the ore is still captive. An outside influence smelts it free of the clogging ore. The iron is emancipated iron, now, but indifferent to further progress. An outside influence beguiles it into the Bessemer furnace and refines it into steel of the first quality. It is educated now—its training is complete. And it has reached its limit. By no possible process can it be educated into gold. Will you set that down?

Y. M. Yes. "Everything has its limit—iron ore cannot be educated into gold."

O. M. There are gold men, and tin men, and copper men, and leaden men, and steel men, and so on—and each has the limitations of his nature, his heredities, his training and his environment. You can build engines out of each of these metals, and they will all perform, but you must not require the weak ones to do equal work with the strong ones. In each case, to get the best results, you must free the metal from its obstructing prejudicial ores by education—smelting, refining, and so forth.

Y. M. You have arrived at man, now?

O. M. Yes. Man the machine—man the impersonal engine. Whatsoever a man is, is due to his make, and to the influences brought to bear upon it by his heredities, his habitat, his associations. He is moved, directed, *commanded*, by exterior influences—solely. He originates nothing, not even a thought.

Y. M. Oh, come! Where did I get my opinion that this which you are talking is all foolishness?

O. M. It is a quite natural opinion—indeed an inevitable opinion—but you did not create the materials out of which it is formed. They are odds and ends of thoughts, impressions, feelings, gathered unconsciously from a thousand books, a thousand conversations, and from streams of thought and feeling which have flowed down into your heart and brain out of the hearts and brains of centuries

of ancestors. Personally you did not create even the smallest microscopic fragment of the materials out of which your opinion is made; and personally you cannot claim even the slender merit of putting the borrowed materials together. That was done automatically—by your mental machinery, in strict accordance with the law of that machinery's construction. And you not only did not make that machinery yourself, but you have not even any command over it.

Y. M. This is too much. You think I could have formed no opinion but that one?

O. M. Spontaneously? No. And you did not form that one; your machinery did it for you—automatically and instantly, without reflection of the need of it.

Mark Twain is a good reasoner, but like so many professional philosophers he falls into the trap of his own nomenclature. He personifies abstract ideas. His terms such as "mind" and the "ego," become independent beings, and he has much to say of the task-master, of the stern judge whose approval every one seeks. But are not our mind and the stern master whose slaves we are, parts of ourselves? This stern master is the ultimate court of appeal which has originated in the course of the development of our humanity with unavoidable necessity; he is the climax of our moral evolution. Every man has his own master who is his better self, representing self-control, and the height thus attained is different in different persons. What the master decides is our own decision.

We are told that our stern master is a terrible tyrant; that if we do a good deed we do it because he compels us to do it; and if we are drunkards or thieves or murderers, we are such and act accordingly at his behest. We are not free, we are his slaves.

Let us restate the facts not in the mythological description of Mark Twain but as they really are: Man's mind is a complex multitude of ideas more or less systematically arranged. There are sensations and different centers of various sensation, there are motory centers, there is a language center, there is a special supreme ruler of the whole empire. He calls himself in common language "I," and this "I" (in philosophical language called *ego*) is practically what Mark Twain calls our master.

Now let us bear in mind that man's soul is a very complicated organism and consists of many different motor-ideas which press into action. They are relatively independent and sometimes irrepressible. As they are by no means agreed we would sometimes like to do several things at once which however is impossible. We can do one thing only at the time, and these different motor ideas must come to an agreement. Frequently there originates a quarrel among the motor ideas and one—of course the strongest one—takes the lead and compels the others to keep quiet, at least at the time. The quarrel, commonly called deliberation, ended, we say, "*I will do this.*" This "*I*" is the center of our mentality, it is what Mark Twain calls our master, but closely considered this terrible tyrant is only another name for the representative of our self.

Mark Twain has not investigated how this master of ours has originated, and we will here try to explain the character of this important piece of machinery in a few lines. The ego of man is ultimately nothing but a center of thought. It is the mere word "*I*" and this word represents the entire personality. It is like the apex of a pyramid. Every one calls himself "*I*," but every one is different, and this little word means all the motor ideas, all the thoughts, the sentiments, the mental and bodily faculties, the appetites, ideas, conceptions, aspirations, convictions, and ideals of the personality for which it stands.

Among the multitudes of our tendencies there is one group predominant. It is built up of structures forged by repeated experiences and fortified by education. It has been condensed out of innumerable observations and reflections, proclaiming the result in the shape of principles. This is what is commonly called conscience. Mark Twain does not distinguish between the "*I*" and the conscience, but we would say that they are by no means the same. If the conscience takes possession of the "*I*" and makes the "*I*" act according to its dictates, we may very well say that we do an act for duty's sake, but no human person can do it unless the "*I*" adopts the advice of its conscience, and it is natural that we appreciate actions done in this way. A man-machine in which the conscience has this power is deemed superior to one in which the behests of the stern tyrant are set aside.

Besides the conscience there are other tendencies which have a strong hold on the "*I*." Among them we will mention the hankering after pleasure, and the nature of our pleasures depends very much upon the constitution of a personality down to its deepest and

most elementary roots in the lower structures of the sensual centers. There are men of all kinds of temper and inclination, developed under different conditions of life. There is the drunkard, there is the combative man who looks for a quarrel, there is the lover of gain who would enjoy taking advantage of his neighbor in business, there is the miser, and besides all the vicious kinds of men there are those of indifferent and also of noble tendencies.

The slightest disposition in our minds may be characterized as a piece of machinery which will assert its influence upon the whole in one way or another. The whole composition of the soul must be granted to be analogous to a machine, and we may even call its activity mechanical or machine-like. Every deliberation in the minds of man is a mechanical process, and we may very well speak of the dynamics of the mind. Educators and reformers ought to know this truth, and when it comes to practical work they act as if for education nothing was needed more than the insertion of machinery which will work for good.

The tendency to stimulate the human mind by wrong motives for accomplishing good ends is quite common, and it is this mainly which Mark Twain criticizes in our religious teachings. Mark Twain is quite right in saying that a pious Christian does not do an act of self-sacrifice for the sake of God or of Christ, or whatever his idea may be of the all-compelling divine authority which he obeys, but he follows his own master in him, and he must please him first. But what he really means to say, if we replace his mythological terminology by straight facts, is this, that before any person would live up to a certain ideal this ideal must be adopted as his own; it must gain his approval. A man must be able to say: "I will do this work of self-sacrifice," and Mark Twain's notion in attributing to the word "I" the rôle of a master who governs us had better be expressed in this way, that nothing, neither our vicious hankering after detrimental pleasure nor our nobler tendencies for doing good to our fellowmen or bringing any self-sacrifice, can be done by us until we ourselves decide upon the course of action we want to pursue. This means that every one in coming to a decision must be able to say: "I do this because this is my inmost desire," "this pleases me," "this I do because I adopt this motor idea as my own." This cerebral structure which says "I" in us, this apex of our soul, the center of our personality, pronounces a decision, the result of a deliberation, and is an expression of our self. Accordingly this is



not an act of slavish subjection, but it characterizes the nature of our inmost being.

The ego of man is, as it were, surrounded by its ministers who represent the different departments of his being. There are his animal instincts, there are his preferences. Every man has his own special tendencies and ideals; there are some who are anxious to collect treasures of art, others to accomplish certain deeds, others to acquire accomplishments, others to make a fortune, and there is no limit to the varieties of tendencies in different persons. The art of influencing one's fellows consists exactly in knowing the idiosyncracies wherewith they can be baited. A practical psychologist can play on these preferences as an organist may play on the organ. An instance of how different characters have to be handled may be found in the story of Reynard the Fox, who dupes the cat by a prospect of catching mice and the bear by his fondness for honey.

Mark Twain's philosophy is true as to facts but his attitude is wrong, and the source of his error lies in the mistaken mythology in which he dresses his psychological nomenclature. His dialogue continues:

O. M. I am sorry, but you see, yourself, that your mind is merely a machine, nothing more. You have no command over it, it has no command over itself—it is worked solely from the outside. That is the law of its make; it is the law of all machines.

Y. M. Can't I ever change one of these automatic opinions?

O. M. No. You can't yourself, but exterior influences can do it.

Y. M. And exterior ones only?

O. M. Yes—exterior ones only.

Y. M. That position is untenable—I may say ludicrously untenable.

O. M. What makes you think so?

Y. M. I don't merely think it, I know it. Suppose I resolve to enter upon a course of thought, and study, and reading, with the deliberate purpose of changing that opin-

ion; and suppose I succeed. That is not the work of an exterior impulse, the whole of it is mine *in persona*; for I originated the project.

O. M. Not a shred of it. It grew out of this talk with me. But for that it would never have occurred to you. No man ever originates anything. All his thoughts, all his impulses, come from the outside.

Y. M. It's an exasperating subject. The first man had original thoughts, anyway; there was nobody to draw from.

O. M. It is a mistake. Adam's thoughts came to him from the outside. You have a fear of death. You did not invent that—you got it from outside, from talk and teaching. Adam had no fear of death—none in the world.

Y. M. Yes he had.

O. M. When he was created?

Y. M. No.

O. M. When, then?

Y. M. When he was threatened with it.

O. M. Then it came from the outside. Adam is quite big enough; let us not try to make a god of him. None but gods have ever had a thought which did not come from the outside. Adam probably had a good head, but it was of no sort of use to him until it was filled up from the outside. He was not able to invent the triflingest little thing with it. He had not a shadow of a notion of the difference between good and evil—he had got the idea from the outside.

To this rule that man is a machine and that the grist which the mill of his mind works out comes from the outside, even a genius is no exception.

O. M. Shakespeare created nothing. He correctly observed, and he marvelously painted. He exactly portrayed people whom God had created; but he created none himself. Let us spare him the slander of charging him with trying. Shakespeare could not create. He was a machine, and machines do not create.

Mark Twain claims that there is no personal merit. We are what we are because God, or whatever you will call outside influences, made us so.

O. M. Personal merit? No. A brave man does not create his bravery. He is entitled to no personal credit for possessing it. It is born to him. A baby born with a billion dollars—where is the personal merit in that? A baby born with nothing—where is the personal demerit in that? The one is fawned upon, admired, worshiped, by sycophants; the other is neglected and despised—where is the sense in it?

Y. M. Sometimes a timid man sets himself the task of conquering his cowardice and becoming brave—and succeeds. What do you say to that?

O. M. That it shows the value of training in right directions over training in wrong ones. Estimably valuable is training, influence, education, in right directions—training one's self-approbation to elevate its ideals. . . . In the world's view he is a worthier man than he was before, but he didn't achieve the change—the merit of it is not his.

The Old Man explains that "David was brave and fought Goliath. A coward would not have done it. David could not help being brave." This shocks the Young Man who exclaims, "Hang it, where is the sense in his becoming brave if he is to get no credit for it?" and the Old Man answers, "The sole impulse that ever moves a person to do a thing" is "the necessity of contenting his own spirit and winning its approval." This subject is discussed in a special chapter, and this idea forms the key to Mark Twain's psychology. He says:

Yes, this is the law, keep it in your mind. From his cradle to his grave a man never does a single thing which has any *first and foremost* object but one, to secure peace of mind, spiritual comfort, for *himself*.

As an instance he cites the duel of Alexander Hamilton. He says:

O. M. Alexander Hamilton was a conspicuously high-principled man. He regarded duelling as wrong, and as opposed to the teachings of religion—but in deference to public opinion he fought a duel. He deeply loved his family, but to buy public approval he treacherously deserted them and threw his life away, ungenerously leaving them to life-long sorrow in order that he might stand well with a foolish world. In the then condition of the public standards of honor he could not have been comfortable with the stigma upon him of having refused to fight. The teachings of religion, his devotion to his family, his kindness of heart, his high principles, all went for nothing when they stood in the way of his spiritual comfort. A man will do anything, no matter what it is, to secure his spiritual comfort; and he can neither be forced nor persuaded to any act which has not that goal for its object. Hamilton's act was compelled by the inborn necessity of contenting his own spirit; in this it was like all the other acts of life, and like all the acts of all men's lives. Do you see where the kernel of the matter lies? A man cannot be comfortable without his own approval. He will secure the largest share possible of that, at all costs, all sacrifices.

Y. M. A minute ago you said Hamilton fought that duel to get public approval.

O. M. I did. By refusing to fight the duel he would have secured his family's approval and a large share of his own; but the public approval was more valuable in his eyes than all other approvals put together—in the earth or above it; to secure that would furnish him the most comfort of mind, the most self-approval; so he sacrificed all other values to get it.

Y. M. Some noble souls have refused to fight duels, and have manfully braved the public contempt.

O. M. They acted according to their make. They val-

ued their principles and the approval of their families above the public approval. They took the thing they valued most and let the rest go. They took what would give them the largest share of personal contentment and approval—a man always does. Public opinion cannot force that kind of men to go to the wars. When they go it is for other reasons. Other spirit-contenting reasons.

The motives which are generally given are, according to the Old Man, wrong names. The Young Man asks for the meaning of love, hate, charity, revenge, humanity, magnanimity, forgiveness, but he is put down by the Old Man who says:

Different results of the one Master Impulse: the necessity of securing one's self-approval. They wear diverse clothes and are subject to diverse moods, but in whatsoever ways they masquerade they are the same person all the time. To change the figure, the compulsion that moves a man—and there is but one—is the necessity of securing the contentment of his own spirit. When it stops, the man is dead.

Y. M. That is foolishness. Love—

O. M. Why, love is that impulse, that law, in its most uncompromising form. It will squander life and everything else on its object. Not primarily for the object's sake, but for its own. When its object is happy it is happy—and that is what it is unconsciously after.

Y. M. You do not even except the lofty and gracious passion of mother-love?

O. M. No, it is the absolute slave of that law. The mother will go naked to clothe her child; she will starve that it may have food; suffer torture to save it from pain; die that it may live. She takes a living pleasure in making these sacrifices. She does it for that reward—that self-approval, that contentment, that peace, that comfort. She would do it for your child *if she could get the same pay.*

Y. M. This is an infernal philosophy of yours.

O. M. It isn't a philosophy, it is a fact.

No other motives count. That impulse in us is our master and there is no virtue, no self-sacrifice. The Old Man says:

Men pretend to self-sacrifices, but this is a thing which in the ordinary value of the phrase, does not exist and has not existed. A man often honestly thinks he is sacrificing himself merely and solely for some one else, but he is deceived; his bottom impulse is to content a requirement of his nature and training, and thus acquire peace for his soul.

Y. M. Apparently, then, all men, both good and bad ones, devote their lives to contenting their consciences?

O. M. Yes. That is a good enough name for it: Conscience—that independent Sovereign, that insolent absolute Monarch inside of a man who is man's Master. There are all kinds of consciences, because there are all kinds of men. You satisfy an assassin's conscience in one way, a philanthropist's in another, a miser's in another, a burglar's in still another. As a guide or incentive to any authoritatively prescribed line of morals or conduct, (leaving training out of the account,) a man's conscience is totally valueless. I knew a kind-hearted Kentuckian whose self-approval was lacking—whose conscience was troubling him, to phrase it with exactness—because he had neglected to kill a certain man—a man whom he had never seen. The stranger had killed this man's friend in a fight, this man's Kentucky training made it a duty to kill the stranger for it. He neglected his duty—kept dodging it, shirking it, putting it off, and his unrelenting conscience kept persecuting him for his conduct. At last, to get ease of mind, comfort, self-approval, he hunted up the stranger and took his life. It was an immense act of self-sacrifice (as per the usual definition) for he did not want to do it, and he never would have done it if he could have bought a con-

tented spirit and an unworried mind at smaller cost. But we are so made that we will pay anything for that contentment—even another man's life.

Our master is our conscience, but the Old Man concedes at least that conscience can be trained to shun evil and prefer good, but under all circumstances the voice of the conscience is admitted "for spirit-contenting reasons only." Concerning conscience Mark Twain inserts a little story. He says:

O. M. I will tell you a little story:

Once upon a time an Infidel was guest in the house of a Christian widow whose little boy was ill and near to death. The Infidel often watched by the bedside and entertained the boy with talk, and he used these opportunities to satisfy a strong longing of his nature—that desire which is in us all to better other people's condition by having them think as we think. He was successful. But the dying boy, in his last moments, reproached him and said:

"I believed, and was happy in it; you have taken my belief away, and my comfort. Now I have nothing left, and I die miserable; for the things which you have told me do not take the place of that which I have lost."

And the mother also reproached the Infidel, and said:

"My child is forever lost, and my heart is broken. How could you do this cruel thing? We have done you no harm, but only kindness; we made our house your home, you were welcome to all we had, and this is our reward."

The heart of the Infidel was filled with remorse for what he had done, and he said:

"It was wrong—I see it now; but I was only trying to do him good. In my view he was in error; it seemed my duty to teach him the truth."

Then the mother said:

"I had taught him, all his little life, what I believed to be the truth, and in his believing faith both of us were happy. Now he is dead—and lost; and I am miserable

Our faith came down to us through centuries of believing ancestors; what right had you, or any one, to disturb it? Where was your honor, where was your shame?

Y. M. He was a miscreant, and deserved death!

O. M. He thought so himself, and said so.

Y. M. Ah—you see, his conscience was awakened!

O. M. Yes—his self-disapproval was. It pained him to see the mother suffer. He was sorry he had done a thing which brought him pain. It did not occur to him to think of the mother when he was mis-teaching the boy, for he was absorbed in providing pleasure for himself, then. Providing it by satisfying what he believed to be a call of duty.

Y. M. Call it what you please, it is a case of awakened conscience. That awakened conscience could never get itself into that species of trouble again. A cure like that is a permanent cure.

O. M. Pardon—I had not finished the story. We are creatures of outside influences—we originate nothing within. Whenever we take a new line of thought and drift into a new line of belief and action, the impulse is always suggested from the outside. Remorse so preyed upon the Infidel that it dissolved his harshness toward the boy's religion and made him come to regard it with tolerance, next with kindness, for the boy's sake and the mother's. Finally he found himself examining it. From that moment his progress in his new trend was steady and rapid. He became a believing Christian. And now his remorse for having robbed the dying boy of his faith and his salvation was bitterer than ever. It gave him no rest, no peace. He must have rest and peace—it is the law of our nature. There seemed but one way to get it; he must devote himself to saving imperiled souls. He became a missionary. He landed in a pagan country ill and helpless. A native widow took him into her humble home and nursed



him back to convalescence. Then her young boy was taken hopelessly ill, and the grateful missionary helped her tend him. Here was his first opportunity to repair a part of the wrong done to the other boy by doing a precious service for this one by undermining his foolish faith in his false gods. He was successful. But the dying boy in his last moments reproached him and said:

"I believed, and was happy in it; you have taken my belief away, and my comfort. Now I have nothing left and I die miserable; for the things which you have told me do not take the place of that which I have lost."

And the mother, also, reproached the missionary, and said:

"My child is forever lost, and my heart is broken. How could you do this cruel thing? We had done you no harm, but only kindness; we made our house your home, you were welcome to all we had, and this is our reward."

The heart of the missionary was filled with remorse for what he had done, and he said:

"It was wrong—I see it now; but I was trying to do him good. In my view he was in error; it seemed my duty to teach him the truth."

Then the mother said:

"I had taught him, all his little life, what I believed to be the truth, and in his believing faith both of us were happy. Now he is dead—and lost; and I am miserable. Our faith came down to us through centuries of believing ancestors; what right had you, or any one, to disturb it? Where was your honor, where was your shame?"

The missionary's anguish of remorse and sense of treachery were as bitter and persecuting and unappeasable, now, as they had been in the former case. The story is finished. What is your comment?

Y. M. The man's conscience was a fool! It was morbid. It didn't know right from wrong.

O. M. I am not sorry to hear you say that. If you grant that one man's conscience doesn't know right from wrong, it is an admission that there are others like it. This single admission pulls down the whole doctrine of infallibility in consciences. Meantime there is one thing which I ask you to notice.

Y. M. What is that?

O. M. That in both cases the man's act gave him no spiritual discomfort, and that he was quite satisfied with it and got pleasure out of it. But afterward when it resulted in pain to him he was sorry. Sorry it had inflicted pain upon the others, but for no reason under the sun except that their pain gave *him* pain. Our consciences take no notice of pain inflicted upon others until it reaches a point where it gives pain to us. In all cases without exception we are absolutely indifferent to another person's pain until his sufferings make us uncomfortable. Many an infidel would not have been troubled by that Christian mother's distress. Don't you believe that?

Y. M. Yes. You might almost say it of the average infidel, I think.

O. M. And many a missionary, sternly fortified by his sense of duty, would not have been troubled by the pagan mother's distress—Jesuit missionaries in Canada in the early French times, for instance; see episodes quoted by Parkman. . . .

We have smuggled a word into the dictionary which ought not to be there at all—self-sacrifice. It describes a thing which does not exist. But worst of all, we ignore and never mention the sole impulse which dictates and compels a man's every act: the imperious necessity of securing his own approval, in every emergency, and at all costs. To it we owe all that we are.

This master in us is the best a man has and to him we owe our moral progress. This doctrine Mark Twain calls the "gospel of

self-approval." He illustrates it by summing up the contents of a novel in which a pious man abandons his lucrative lumber business and devotes himself to missionary work. He neglect all his duties in life, makes all those dependent on him miserable, and the apparent motive is not to serve the cause of Christ, but his vanity in being praised and flattered by a circle of pious Christians. When he fails to get his pay he is disappointed. The conclusion is that there is no self-sacrifice for others in the common meaning of the phrase, for "men make daily sacrifices for others, but it is for their own sake first." The same is true of duty:

O. M. No man performs a duty for mere duty's sake; the act must content his spirit first. He must feel better for doing the duty than he would for shirking it. Otherwise he will not do it.

Y. M. Take the case of the Berkeley Castle.

O. M. It was a noble duty, greatly performed. Take it to pieces and examine it, if you like.

Y. M. A British troop-ship crowded with soldiers and their wives and children. She struck a rock and began to sink. There was room in the boats for the women and children only. The colonel lined up his regiment on the deck and said, "It is our duty to die, that they may be saved." There was no murmur, no protest. The boats carried away the women and children. When the death-moment was come, the colonel and his officers took their several posts, the men stood at shoulder-arms, and so, as on dress-parade, with their flag flying and the drums beating, they went down, a sacrifice to duty for duty's sake. Can you view it as other than that?

O. M. It was something as fine as that, as exalted as that. Could you have remained in those ranks and gone down to your death in that unflinching way?

Y. M. Could I? No, I could not.

O. M. Think. Imagine yourself there, with that watery doom creeping higher and higher around you.

Y. M. I can imagine it. I feel all the horror of it. I

could not have endured it, I could not have remained in my place. I know it.

O. M. Why?

Y. M. There is no why about it: I know myself, and I know I couldn't do it.

O. M. But it would be your duty to do it.

Y. M. Yes, I know—but I couldn't.

O. M. It was more than a thousand men, yet not one of them flinched. Some of them must have been born with your temperament; if they could do that great duty for duty's sake, why not you? Don't you know that you could go out and gather together a thousand clerks and mechanics and put them on that deck and ask them to die for duty's sake, and not two dozen of them would stay in the ranks to the end?

Y. M. Yes, I know that.

O. M. But you train them, and put them through a campaign or two; then they would be soldiers; soldiers, with a soldier's pride, a soldier's self-respect, a soldier's ideals. They would have to content a soldier's spirit then, not a clerk's, not a mechanic's. They could not content that spirit by shirking a soldier's duty, could they?

Y. M. I suppose not.

O. M. Then they would do the duty not for the duty's sake, but for their own sake—primarily. The duty was just the same, and just as imperative, when they were clerks, mechanics, raw recruits, but they wouldn't perform it for that. As clerks and mechanics they had other ideals, another spirit to satisfy, and they satisfied it. They had to; it is the law. Training is potent. Training toward higher and higher, and ever higher ideals is worth any man's thought and labor and diligence.

The two important things are training and the inherited disposition of our character.

It is true there are seekers after truth, but Mark Twain con-

tends that seeking after truth is only temporary. No one will permanently seek after truth. The Old Man says:

We are always hearing of people who are around seeking after truth. I have never seen a (permanent) specimen. I think he has never lived. But I have seen several entirely sincere people who thought they were (permanent) seekers after truth. They sought diligently, persistently, carefully, cautiously, profoundly, with perfect honesty and nicely adjusted judgment—until they believed that without doubt or question they had found the truth. That was the end of the search. The man spent the rest of his life hunting up shingles wherewith to protect his truth from the weather. If he was seeking after political truth he found it in one or another of the hundred political gospels which govern men in the earth; if he was seeking after the only true religion he found it in one or another of the three thousand that are on the market. In any case, when he found the truth he sought no further; but from that day forth, with his soldering iron in one hand and his bludgeon in the other he tinkered its leaks and reasoned with objectors. There have been innumerable temporary seekers after truth—have you ever heard of a permanent one? In the very nature of man such a person is impossible.

This statement is repeated near the end of the discussion where Mark Twain confesses that he has ceased to be a seeker after truth, near the end of the story where he says:

I told you that there are none but temporary truth-seekers; that a permanent one is a human impossibility; that as soon as the seeker finds what he is thoroughly convinced is the truth, he seeks no further, but gives the rest of his days to hunting junk to patch it and caulk it and prop it with, and make it weather-proof and keep it from caving in on him. Hence the Presbyterian remains a Presbyterian, the Spiritualist a Spiritualist, the Democrat a

Democrat, the Republican a Republican, the Monarchist a Monarchist; and if a humble, earnest and sincere seeker after truth should find it in the proposition that the moon is made of green cheese, nothing could ever budge him from that position; for he is nothing but an automatic machine, and must obey the laws of his construction. And so having found the truth, perceiving that beyond question man has but one moving impulse—the contenting of his own spirit—and is merely a machine and entitled to no personal merit for any thing he does, it is not humanly possible for me to seek further. The rest of my days will be spent in patching and painting and puttying and caulking my priceless possession and in looking the other way when an imploring argument or a damaging fact approaches.

Concerning training we listen to the following conversation:

Y. M. Now then, I will ask you where there is any sense in training people to lead virtuous lives. What is gained by it?

O. M. The man himself gets large advantages out of it, and that is the main thing—to him. He is not a peril to his neighbors, he is not a damage to them—and so they get an advantage out of his virtues. That is the main thing to them. It can make this life comparatively comfortable to the parties concerned; the neglect of this training can make this life a constant peril and distress to the parties concerned.

Y. M. You have said that training is everything; that training is the man himself, for it makes him what he is.

O. M. I said training and another thing. . . . That other thing is temperament—that is, the disposition you were born with. You can't eradicate your disposition nor any rag of it—you can only put a pressure on it and keep it down and quiet. You have a warm temper?

Y. M. Yes.

O. M. You will never get rid of it; but by watching it you can keep it down nearly all the time. Its presence is your limit. Your reform will never quite reach perfection, for your temper will beat you now and then, but you will come near enough. You have made valuable progress and can make more. There is use in training. Immense use. . . . Diligently train your ideals upward and still upward toward the summit where you will find your chiefest pleasure in conduct which, while contenting you, will be sure to confer benefits upon your neighbor and the community.

Y. M. Is that a new gospel?

O. M. No.

Y. M. It has been taught before?

O. M. For ten thousand years.

Y. M. By whom?

O. M. All the great religions—all the great gospels.

Y. M. Then there is nothing new about it?

O. M. Oh, yes, there is. It is candidly stated, this time. That has not been done before.

Y. M. How do you mean?

O. M. Haven't I put you *first*, and your neighbor and the community afterward?

Y. M. Well, yes, that is a difference, it is true.

O. M. The difference between straight speaking and crooked; the difference between frankness and shuffling.

Y. M. Explain.

O. M. The others offer you a hundred bribes to be good, thus conceding that the Master inside of you must be conciliated and contented first, and that you will do nothing at first-hand but for his sake; then they turn square around and require you to do good for others' sake chiefly; and to do your duty for duty's sake, chiefly; and to do acts of self-sacrifice. Thus at the outset we all stand upon the same ground—recognition of the supreme and absolute Monarch that resides in man, and we all grovel before

him and appeal to him; then those others dodge and shuffle, and face around and unfrankly and inconsistently and illogically change the form of their appeal and direct its persuasions to man's second-place powers and to powers which have no existence in him, thus advancing them to first place; whereas in my admonition I stick logically and consistently to the original position: I place the Interior Master's requirements first, and keep them there.

While training is helpful Mark Twain believes that man's dignity and the merit he acquires by being trained must be surrendered. The discussion continues on this subject as follows:

Y. M. Then you believe that such tendency toward doing good as is in men's hearts would not be diminished by the removal of the delusion that good deeds are done primarily for the sake of No. 2 instead of for the sake of No. 1?

O. M. That is what I fully believe.

Y. M. Doesn't it somehow seem to take from the dignity of the deed?

O. M. If there is dignity in falsity, it does. It removes that.

Y. M. What is left for the moralist to do?

O. M. Teach unreservedly what he already teaches with one side of his mouth and takes back with the other: Do right for your own sake, and be happy in knowing that your neighbor will certainly share in the benefits resulting.

Man has no more merit than the materials which we handle. For instance:

Here are two ingots of virgin gold. They shall represent a couple of characters which have been refined and perfected in the virtues by years of diligent right training. Suppose you wanted to break down these strong and well compacted characters—what influence would you bring to bear upon the ingots?....



Y. M. A steam-jet cannot break down such a substance.....

O. M. The quicksilver is an outside influence which gold (by its peculiar nature—say temperament, disposition), cannot be indifferent to. It stirs the interest of the gold, although we do not perceive it; but a single application of the influence works no damage. Let us continue the application in a steady stream, and call each minute a year. By the end of ten or twenty minutes—ten or twenty years—the little ingot is sodden with quicksilver, its virtues are gone, its character is degraded. At last it is ready to yield to a temptation which it would have taken no notice of, ten or twenty years ago. We will apply that temptation in the form of a pressure of my finger. You note the result?

Y. M. Yes; the ingot has crumbled to sand.

The instance of two ingots of gold is further explained by a story of two brothers, which is probably taken from some newspaper account. The Old Man says:

There was once a pair of New England boys—twins. They were alike in good dispositions, fleckless morals, and personal appearance. They were the models of the Sunday-school. At fifteen George had an opportunity to go as cabin-boy in a whale-ship, and sailed away for the Pacific. Henry remained at home in the village. At eighteen George was a sailor before the mast, and Henry was teacher of the advanced Bible class. At twenty-two George, through fighting-habits and drinking-habits acquired at sea and in the sailor boarding-houses of the European and Oriental ports, was a common rough in Hong Kong, and out of a job; and Henry was superintendent of the Sunday-school. At twenty-six George was a wanderer, a tramp, and Henry was pastor of the village church. Then George came home, and was Henry's guest. One evening a man passed by and turned down the lane, and

Henry said, with a pathetic smile, "Without intending me a discomfort, that man is always keeping me reminded of my pinching poverty, for he carries heaps of money about him, and goes by here every evening of his life." That outside influence—that remark—was enough for George, but it was not the one that made him ambush the man and rob him, it merely represented the eleven years' accumulation of such influences, and gave birth to the act for which their long gestation had made preparation. It had never entered the head of Henry to rob the man—his ingot had been subjected to clean steam only; but George's had been subjected to vaporized quicksilver.

A peculiar theory of Mark Twain is his idea that the mind is a machinery which is independent of man, as if there were no connection between what he calls the stern master or the impulse and the mentality of man. The mind works whether the master wants it or not. The Young Man asks whether man's mind works automatically and is really independent of control. The Old Man says:

It is diligently at work, unceasingly at work, during every waking moment. Have you never tossed about all night, imploring, beseeching, commanding your mind to stop work and let you go to sleep?—you who perhaps imagine that your mind is your servant and must obey your orders, think what you tell it to think, and stop when you tell it to stop. When it chooses to work, there is no way to keep it still for an instant. The brightest man would not be able to supply it with subjects if he had to hunt them up. If it needed the man's help it would wait for him to give it work when he wakes in the morning. . . . The mind is independent of the man. He has no control over it, it does as it pleases. It will take up a subject in spite of him; it will stick to it in spite of him; it will throw it aside in spite of him. It is entirely independent of him. . . . Yes, asleep as well as awake. The mind is quite independent. It is master. You have nothing to do with it. It is so

apart from you that it can conduct its affairs, sing its songs, play its chess, weave its complex and ingeniously-constructed dreams, while you sleep or wake. You have imagined that you could originate a thought in your mind, and you have sincerely believed you could do it.

Mark Twain reminds us of the well-known truth that sometimes we can not rid ourselves of jingles of melodies that haunt us, and claims that mind is just as independent in dreams as when awake. He compares the dream to a drama. He says:

Your dreaming mind originates the scheme, consistently and artistically develops it, and carries the little drama creditably through—all without help or suggestion from you.

Though the mind is independent man has the power to set it to work on the subject which pleases the mind. We read:

O. M. A man's mind, left free, has no use for his help. But there is one way whereby he can get its help when he desires it.

Y. M. What is that way?

O. M. When your mind is racing along from subject to subject and strikes an inspiring one, open your mouth and begin talking upon that matter—or take your pen and use that. It will interest your mind and concentrate it, and it will pursue the subject with satisfaction. It will take full charge, and furnish the words itself. . . . Take a "flash of wit"—repartee. Flash is the right word. It is out instantly. There is no time to arrange the words. There is no thinking, no reflecting. Where there is a wit-mechanism it is automatic in its action, and needs no help. Where the wit-mechanism is lacking, no amount of study and reflection can manufacture the product.

Y. M. You really think a man originates nothing, creates nothing?

O. M. I do. Men perceive, and their brain-machines automatically combine the things perceived. That is all.

Y. M. The steam engine?

O. M. It takes fifty men a hundred years to invent it. One meaning of invent is discover. I use the word in that sense. Little by little they discover and apply the multitude of details that go to make the perfect engine. Watt noticed that confined steam was strong enough to lift the lid of the tea-pot. He didn't create the idea, he merely discovered the fact; the cat had noticed it a hundred times. From the tea-pot he evolved the piston-rod. To attach something to the piston-rod to be moved by it, was a simple matter—crank and wheel. And so there was a working engine.

One by one, improvements were discovered by men who used their eyes, not their creating powers—for they hadn't any—and now, after a hundred years, the patient contributions of fifty or a hundred observers stand compacted in the wonderful machine which drives the ocean liner.

The animal mind is not different from the mind of man, only man's mind is more complicated but by no means superior. Shakespeare writes a drama borrowing from preceding ages. He puts this and that together. That is all he does and can do, but so does the rat. Concerning the rat Mark Twain says:

He observes a smell, he infers a cheese, he seeks and finds. The astronomer observes this and that; adds his this and that to the this-and-thats of a hundred predecessors, infers an invisible planet, seeks it and finds it. The rat gets into a trap; gets out with trouble; infers that cheese in traps lacks value, and meddles with that trap no more. The astronomer is very proud of his achievement, the rat is proud of his. Yet both are machines, they have done machine work, they have originated nothing, they have no right to be vain, the whole credit belongs to their Maker. They are entitled to no honors, no praises, no monuments when they die, no remembrance. One is a complex and elaborate machine, the other a simple and

limited machine, but they are alike in principle, function and process, and neither of them works otherwise than automatically, and neither of them may righteously claim a personal superiority or a personal dignity above the other. . . .

Y. M. It is odious. Those drunken theories of yours—concerning the rat and all that—strip man bare of all his dignities, grandeurs, sublimities.

O. M. He hasn't any to strip—they are shams, stolen clothes. He claims credits which belong solely to his Maker. . . . I think that the rat's mind and the man's mind are the same machine, but of unequal capacities—like yours and Edison's; like the African pigmy's and Homer's; like the Bushman's and Bismarck's.

Y. M. How are you going to make that out, when the lower animals have no mental quality but instinct, while man possesses reason?

O. M. What is instinct?

Y. M. It is merely unthinking and mechanical exercise of inherited habit?

The term instinct is meaningless. The Old Man says:

Now my idea of the meaningless term "instinct" is, that it is merely petrified thought; solidified and made inanimate by habit; thought which was once alive and awake, but is become unconscious—walks in its sleep so to speak.

For a further explanation of the thinking ability of animals the Old Man presents two instances concerning gulls supposed to belong to the most stupid animals.

Here is the experience of a gull, as related by a naturalist. The scene is a Scotch fishing village where the gulls were kindly treated. This particular gull visited a cottage; was fed; came next day and was fed again; came into the house, next time, and ate with the family; kept on doing this almost daily thereafter. But, once the gull

was away on a journey for a few days, and when it returned the house was vacant. Its friends had removed to a village three miles distant. Several months later it saw the head of the family on the street there, followed him home, entered the house without excuse or apology, and became a daily guest again. Gulls do not rank high, mentally, but this one had memory and reasoning faculty.

Here is a case of a bird and a stranger as related by a naturalist. An Englishman saw a bird flying around about his dog's head, down in the grounds, and uttering cries of distress. He went there to see about it. The dog had a young bird in his mouth—unhurt. The gentleman rescued it and put it on a bush and brought the dog away. Early the next morning the mother-bird came for the gentleman, who was sitting on his verandah, and by its maneuvers persuaded him to follow it to a distant part of the grounds—flying a little way in front of him and waiting for him to catch up, and so on; and keeping to the winding path, too, instead of flying the near way across lots. The same dog was the culprit; he had the young bird again, and once more he had to give it up. Since the stranger had helped her once, she inferred that he would do it again; she knew where to find him, and she went upon her errand with confidence. Her mental processes were what Edison's would have been. She put this and that together—and that is all that thought is—and out of them built her logical arrangement of inferences. Edison could not have done it any better himself.

Y. M. Do you think that many of the dumb animals can think?

O. M. Yes—the elephant, the monkey, the horse, the dog, the parrot, the macaw, the mocking-bird, and many others. The elephant whose mate fell into a pit, and who dumped dirt and rubbish into the pit till the bottom was raised high enough to enable the captive to step out, was

equipped with the reasoning quality. Dogs and elephants learn all sorts of wonderful things. They must surely be able to notice, and to put things together, and say to themselves, "I get the idea, now: when I do so and so, as per order, I am praised and fed; when I do differently I am punished." Fleas can be taught nearly anything that a congressman can. . . . As a thinker and planner the ant is the equal of any savage race of men; as a self-educated specialist in several arts she is the superior of any savage race of men; and in one or two high mental qualities she is above the reach of any man, savage or civilized.

Y. M. Oh, come! you are abolishing the intellectual frontier which separated man and beast.

O. M. I beg your pardon. One cannot abolish what does not exist.

Y. M. You are not in earnest, I hope. You cannot seriously mean to say there is no frontier.

O. M. I do say it seriously.

The Young Man objects that animals are dumb, but the Old Man flatly denies it. He says:

"Dumb" beast suggests an animal that has no thought-machinery, no understanding, no speech, no way of communicating what is in its mind. We know that a hen has speech. We cannot understand everything she says, but we easily learn two or three of her phrases. We know when she is saying, "I have laid an egg"; we know when she is saying to the chicks, "Run here, dears, I've found a worm"; we know what she is saying when she voices a warning, "Quick! hurry! gather yourselves under mamma, there's a hawk coming!" We understand the cat when she stretches herself out, purring with affection and contentment and lifts up a soft voice and says, "Come, kitties, supper's ready"; we understand her when she goes mourning about and says, "Where can they be?—they are lost—won't you help me hunt for them?" and we understand

the disreputable Tom when he challenges at midnight from his shed, "You come over here, you product of immoral commerce, and I'll make your fur fly!" We understand a few of the dog's phrases, and we learn to understand a few of the remarks and gestures of any bird or other animal that we domesticate and observe. The clearness and exactness of a few of the hen's speeches which we understand is argument that she can communicate to her kind a hundred things which we cannot comprehend—in a word, that she can converse. And this argument is also applicable in the Unrevealed. It is just like man's vanity and impertinence to call an animal dumb because it is dumb to his dull perceptions. . . .

In all his history the aboriginal Australian never thought out a house for himself and built it. The ant is an amazing architect. She is a wee little creature, but she builds a strong and enduring house eight feet high—a house which is as large in proportion to her size as is the largest capitol or cathedral in the world compared to man's size. No savage race has produced architects who could approach the ant in genius or culture. No civilized race has produced architects who could plan a house better for the uses proposed than can hers. Her house contains a throne-room; nurseries for her young; granaries, apartments for her soldiers, her workers, etc.; and they and the multifarious halls and corridors which communicate with them are arranged and distributed with an educated and experienced eye for convenience and adaptability. But let us look further before we decide. The ant has soldiers—battalions, regiments, armies; and they have their appointed captains and generals, who lead them to battle.

Y. M. That could be instinct, too.

O. M. We will look still further. The ant has a system of government; it is well planned, elaborate, and is well carried on.



Y. M. Instinct again.

O. M. She has crowds of slaves, and is a hard and unjust employer of forced labor.

Y. M. Instinct.

O. M. She has cows, and milks them.

Y. M. Instinct, of course.

O. M. In Texas she lays out a farm twelve feet square, plants it, weeds it, gathers the crop and stores it away.

Y. M. Instinct, all the same.

O. M. The ant discriminates between friend and stranger. Sir John Lubbock took ants from two different nests, made them drunk with whisky and laid them, unconscious, by one of the nests, near some water. Ants from the nest came and examined and discussed these disgraced creatures, then carried their friends home and threw the strangers overboard. Sir John repeated the experiment a number of times. For a time the sober ants did as they had done at first—carried their friends home and threw the strangers overboard. But finally they lost patience, seeing that their reformatory efforts went for nothing, and threw both friends and strangers overboard. Come—is this instinct, or is it thoughtful and intelligent discussion of a thing new—absolutely new—to their experience; with a verdict arrived at, sentence passed, and judgment executed? Is it instinct?—thought petrified by ages of habit—or isn't it brand-new thought, inspired by the new occasion, the new circumstances?

I will give you another instance of thought. Franklin had a cup of sugar on a table in his room. The ants got at it. He tried several preventives; the ants rose superior to them. Finally he contrived one which shut off access—probably set the table's legs in pans of water, or drew a circle of tar around the cup, I don't remember. At any rate he watched to see what they would do. They tried various schemes—failures, every one. The ants were puz-

zled. Finally they held a consultation, discussed the problem, arrived at a decision—and this time they beat that great philosopher. They formed in procession, crossed the floor, climbed the wall, marched across the ceiling to a point just over the cup, then one by one they let go and fell down into it! Was that instinct—thought petrified by ages of inherited habit?

Y. M. No, I don't believe it was. I believe it was a newly-reasoned scheme to meet a new emergency.

O. M. Very well. You have conceded the reasoning power in two instances. I come now to a mental detail wherein the ant is a long way the superior of any human being. Sir John Lubbock proved by many experiments that an ant knows a stranger-ant of her own species in a moment, even when the stranger is disguised—with paint. Also he proved that an ant knows every individual in her hive of 500,000 souls. Also, after a year's absence of one of the 500,000 she will straightway recognize the returned absentee and grace the recognition with an affectionate welcome. How are these recognitions made? Not by color, for painted ants were recognized. Not by smell, for ants that had been dipped in chloroform were recognized. Not by speech and not by antennae-signs nor contacts, for the drunken and motionless ants were recognized and the friend discriminated from the stranger. The ants were all of the same species, therefore the friends had to be recognized by form and feature—friends who formed part of a hive of 500,000! Has any man a memory for form and feature approaching that?

Y. M. Certainly not.

O. M. Franklin's ant and Lubbock's ants show fine capacities of putting this and that together in new and untried emergencies and deducting smart conclusions from the combinations—a man's mental process exactly. With memory to help, man preserves his observations and rea-

sonings, reflects upon them, adds to them, re-combines, and so proceeds, stage by stage, to far results—from the tea-kettle to the ocean greyhound's complex engine; from personal labor to slave labor; from wigwam to palace; from the capricious chase to agriculture, and stored food; from nomadic life to stable government and concentrated authority; from incoherent hordes to massed armies. The ant has observation, the reasoning faculty, and the preserving adjunct of a prodigious memory; she has duplicated man's development and the essential features of his civilization, and you call it all instinct!

Y. M. We have come a good way. As a result—as I understand it—I am required to concede that there is absolutely no intellectual frontier separating man and the unrevealed creatures?

O. M. That is what you are required to concede. There is no such frontier—there is no way to get around that. Man has a finer and more capable machine in him than those others, but it is the same machine and works in the same way. And neither he nor those others can command the machine—it is strictly automatic, independent of control, works when it pleases, and when it doesn't please, it can't be forced.

Y. M. Then man and the other animals are all alike, as to mental machinery, and there isn't any difference of any stupendous magnitude between them, except in quantity, not in kind.

O. M. That is about the state of it—intellectuality. There are pronounced limitations on both sides. We can't learn to understand much of their language, but the dog, the elephant, etc., learn to understand a very great deal of ours. To that extent they are our superiors. On the other hand they can't learn reading, writing, etc., nor any of our fine and high things, and there we have a large advantage over them.

Concerning the moral sense of animals the Young Man expects his old friend to make an exception in favor of man, but the Old Man prefers animals' morality to man's. He says: "I wasn't going to hoist man up to that." This is too much for the Young Man who claims that man at least has free will and a choice between different actions. He insists that while animals do their work according to their machine, man determines his decisions, and in doing so he exercises free will, but this choice Mark Twain claims is only allowed to the mind. Man's stern master would not allow free choice. Part of the discussion reads as follows:

O. M. The mind can freely select, choose, point out, the right and just one—its function stops there. It can go no further in the matter. It has no authority to say that the right one shall be acted upon and the wrong one discarded. That authority is in other hands.

Y. M. The man's?

O. M. In the machine which stands for him. In his born disposition and the character which has been built around it by training and environment.

Y. M. It will act upon the right one of the two?

O. M. It will do as it pleases in the matter. George Washington's machine would act upon the right one; Pizarro's mind would know which was the right one and which the wrong, but the Master inside of Pizarro would act upon the wrong one.

Y. M. Then as I understand it a bad man's mental machinery calmly and judicially points out which of two things is right and just—

O. M. Yes, and his moral machinery will freely act upon the one or the other, according to its make. His temperament and training will decide what he shall do, and he will do it; he cannot help himself, he has no authority over the matter. . . .

There is will. But it has nothing to do with intellectual perceptions of right and wrong, and is not under their command. David's temperament and training had will,

and it was compulsory force; David had to obey its decrees, he had no choice. The coward's temperament and training possess will, and it is compulsory; it commands him to avoid danger, and he obeys, he has no choice. But neither the Davids nor the cowards possess free will—will that may do the right or do the wrong, as their mental verdict shall decide.

We note here that all decisions are spiritual. The Old Man corrects the Young Man as to his notion of materiality. He says:

There is no such thing as material covetousness. All covetousness is spiritual. The Master in you requires that in all cases you shall content his spirit—that alone. He never requires anything else, he never interests himself in any other matter.

Y. M. Ah, come! When he covets somebody's money—isn't that rather distinctly material and gross?

O. M. No. The money is merely a symbol—it represents in visible and concrete form a spiritual desire. Any so-called material thing that you want is merely a symbol: you want it not for itself, but because it will content your spirit for the moment. . . . There is that pathetic tale of the man who labored like a slave, unsatisfied, until he had accumulated a fortune, and was happy over it, jubilant about it; then in a single week a pestilence swept away all whom he held dear and left him desolate. His money's value was gone. He realized that his joy in it came not from the money itself, but from the spiritual contentment he got out of his family's enjoyment of the pleasures and delights it lavished upon them. Money has no material value; if you remove its spiritual value nothing is left but dross. It is so with all things, little or big, majestic or trivial—there are no exceptions. Crowns, scepters, pennies, paste jewels, village notoriety, world-wide fame—they are all the same, they have no material value: while

they content the spirit they are precious, when this fails they are worthless.

A peculiar notion of Mark Twain is his belief in the self-advertisement of all different nations, all agreeing in being possessed of a sanguine temperament. The main-spring in man's life is his temperament, his desire for happiness, not his intellectual reflections. Therefore there is no need of worrying about such a distressing doctrine as his philosophy that man is a machine. Mark Twain says:

A nation can be brought—by force of circumstances, not argument—to reconcile itself to any kind of government or religion that can be devised; in time it will fit itself to the required conditions; later, it will prefer them and will fiercely fight for them. As instances, you have all history: the Greeks, the Romans, the Persians, the Egyptians, the Russians, the Germans, the French, the English, the Spaniards, the Americans, the South Americans, the Japanese, the Chinese, the Hindus, the Turks—a thousand wild and tame religions, every kind of government that can be thought of, from tiger to house-cat, each nation knowing it has the only true religion and the only sane system of government, each despising all the others, each an ass and not suspecting it, each proud of its fancied supremacy, each perfectly sure it is the pet of God, each with undoubting confidence summoning Him to take command in time of war, but by habit able to excuse it and resume compliments—in a word, the whole human race content, always content, persistently content, indestructibly content, happy, thankful, proud, no matter what its religion is, nor whether its master be tiger or house-cat. Am I stating facts? You know I am.

Mark Twain admits that there are different temperaments, and these temperaments are inborn. They can be modified but not changed. His views are illustrated in two friends of the Young Man, one of whom he calls Burgess, the other one Adams. He says concerning them:

Their life-histories are about alike—but look at the

results! Their ages are about the same—around about fifty. Burgess has always been buoyant, hopeful, happy; Adams has always been cheerless, hopeless, despondent. As young fellows, both tried country journalism—and failed. Burgess didn't seem to mind it; Adams couldn't smile, he could only mourn and groan over what had happened, and torture himself with vain regrets for not having done so and so instead of so and so—then he would have succeeded. They tried the law—and failed. Burgess remained happy—because he couldn't help it, Adams was wretched—because he couldn't help it. From that day to this, those two men have gone on trying things and failing: Burgess has come out happy and cheerful every time, Adams the reverse. And we do absolutely know that these men's inborn temperaments have remained unchanged through all the vicissitudes of their material affairs. Let us see how it is with their immaterialities. Both have been zealous democrats; both have been zealous republicans; both have been zealous mugwumps. Burgess has always found happiness and Adams unhappiness, in these several political beliefs and in their migrations out of them. Both of these men have been Presbyterians, Universalists, Methodists, Catholics—then Presbyterians again, then Methodists again. Burgess has always found rest in these excursions, and Adams unrest. They are trying Christian Science now, with the customary result, the inevitable result. No political or religious belief can make Burgess unhappy or the other man happy. I assure you it is purely a matter of temperament. Beliefs are acquirements, temperaments are born; beliefs are subject to change, nothing whatever can change temperament.

This is the reason why no pessimistic philosophy can ever become dangerous. Mark Twain himself might have become a pessimist through the recognition of this sorry truth, but his temperament would not allow it. The discussion on the subject reads:

Y. M. Look at the matter as it stands now. Man has been taught that he is the supreme marvel of the creation; he believes it; in all the ages he has never doubted it, whether he was a naked savage, or clothed in purple and fine linen, and civilized. This has made his heart buoyant, his life cheery. His pride in himself, his sincere admiration of himself, his joy in what he supposed were his own and unassisted achievements, and his exultation over the praise and applause which they evoked—these have exalted him, enthused him, ambitioned him to higher and higher flights; in a word, made his life worth the living. But by your scheme, all this is abolished; he is degraded to a machine, he is a nobody, his noble prides wither to mere vanities; let him strive as he may, he can never be any better than his humblest and stupidest neighbor; he would never be cheerful again, his life would not be worth the living.

O. M. You really think that?

Y. M. I certainly do.

O. M. Have you ever seen me uncheerful, unhappy?

Y. M. No.

O. M. Well, I believe these things. Why have they not made me unhappy?

Y. M. Oh, well—temperament, of course! You never let that escape from your scheme.

O. M. That is correct. If a man is born with an unhappy temperament, nothing can make him happy; if he is born with a happy temperament, nothing can make him unhappy.

In conclusion we represent Mark Twain's explanation of the stern master which governs us, which is the "I," our ego or the "me." The Old Man says:

You perceive that the question of who or what the Me is, is not a simple one at all. You say, "I admire the rainbow," and "I believe the world is round," and in these



cases we find that the Me is not all speaking, but only the mental part. You say "I grieve," and again the Me is not all speaking, but only the moral part. You say the mind is wholly spiritual; then you say "I have a pain" and find that this time the Me is mental and spiritual combined. We all use the "I" in this indeterminate fashion, there is no help for it. We imagine a Master and King over what you call The Whole Thing, and we speak of him as "I," but when we try to define him we find we cannot do it. The intellect and the feelings can act quite independently of each other; we recognize that, and we look around for a ruler who is master over both, and can serve as a definite and indisputable "I," and enable us to know what we mean and who or what we are talking about when we use that pronoun, but we have to give it up and confess that we cannot find him. To me, man is a machine, made up of many mechanisms; the moral and mental ones acting automatically in accordance with the impulses of an interior Master who is built out of born temperament and an accumulation of multitudinous outside influences and trainings; a machine whose one function is to secure the spiritual contentment of the Master, be his desires good or be they evil; a machine whose will is absolute and must be obeyed, and always is obeyed.

Y. M. Maybe the Me is the Soul?

O. M. Maybe it is. What is the Soul?

Y. M. I don't know

O. M. Neither does any one else.

Y. M. What is the Master?—or, in common speech the Conscience? Explain it.

O. M. It is that mysterious autocrat, lodged in man, which compels the man to content its desires. It may be called the Master Passion—the hunger for Self-Approval.

Y. M. Where is its seat?

O. M. In man's moral constitution. . . . It is indifferent

to the man's good; it never concerns itself about anything but the satisfying of its own desires. It can be trained to prefer things which will be for the man's good, but it will prefer them only because they will content it better than other things would. . . . It is a colorless force seated in the man's moral constitution. Let us call it an instinct—a blind, unreasoning instinct, which cannot and does not distinguish between good morals and bad ones, and cares nothing for the results to the man provided its own contentment can be secured; and it will always secure that. It is not always seeking money, it is not always seeking power, nor office, nor any other material advantage. In all cases it seeks a spiritual contentment, let the means be what they may. Its desires are determined by the man's temperament—and it is lord over that. Temperament, Conscience, Susceptibility, Spiritual Appetite, are in fact the same thing. Have you ever heard of a person who cared nothing for money?

In spite of Mark Twain's idea that no amount of theory will disturb man's happiness or his self content, he did not publish his book in his lifetime, and his motives for it are discussed at the end of his conversations, as follows:

Y. M. I have thought over all these talks, and passed them carefully in review. With this result. That—that—are you intending to publish your notions about man some day?

O. M. Now and then, in these past twenty years, the Master inside of me has half-intended to order me to set them to paper and publish them. Do I have to tell you why the order has remained unissued, or can you explain so simple a thing without my help?

Y. M. By your doctrine, it is simplicity itself: Outside influences moved your interior Master to give the order; stronger outside influences deterred him.

O. M. That is correct. Well?

Y. M. Upon reflection I have arrived at the conviction that the publication of your doctrines would be harmful. Do you pardon me?

O. M. Pardon you? You have done nothing. You are an instrument—a speaking-trumpet. Speaking-trumpets are not responsible for what is said through them.

Y. M. Well to begin: it is a desolating doctrine; it is not inspiring, enthusing, uplifting. It takes the glory out of man, it takes the pride out of him, it takes the heroism out of him, it denies him all personal credit, all applause; it not only degrades him to a machine, but allows him no control over the machine; makes a mere coffee-mill of him, and neither permits him to supply the coffee nor turn the crank; his sole and piteously humble function being to grind coarse or fine, according to his make, outside impulses doing all the rest.

O. M. It is correctly stated.

In connection with Mark Twain's condemnation of man's pride and his wrong claim to glory and praise, the Old Man gives all the credit of the accomplishments of man to God. Concerning the virtues of man the Old Man raises the question "Who manufactures them"? and the Young Man answers "God." In comment on this solution of the Young Man, the Old Man defends his position thus:

O. M. Where does the credit of it belong?

Y. M. To God.

O. M. And the glory of which you spoke, and the applause?

Y. M. To God.

O. M. Then it is you who degrade man.

Y. M. You have made a machine of him.

O. M. Who devised that cunning and beautiful mechanism, a man's hand?

Y. M. God.

The Old Man sees no wrong in taking the vainglory of the man out of him and crediting God with all blame as well as praise, and

he adds: "I am merely calling attention to the fact, nothing more. Is it wrong to call attention to the fact, is it a crime?"

Mark Twain's main argument as to the machinelike operations of the human mind is quite sound, but over the facts he casts a gloom which is of his own making. According to him the truth that man is a machine takes away from man all his dignity, for everything that man does, everything he thinks or invents or plans, comes to him from the outside, and the very start of man is due to outside influence; and this is perfectly true. It is the outside from which we gather our experience, and experience builds up man. Man appropriates the building-stones of his mentality from experience, and makes them his own. Man's mind is an echo of his law-ordained surroundings and reflects the universal order of the cosmos.

Mark Twain is right in saying that everything of our mind comes from the outside. Even our inborn tendencies have been built up by what the Buddhists call prior existences. They come to us by heredity and by education; there is nothing in us which we do not owe to the surrounding world. This is a truth which must be acknowledged, but we deny that it carries with it any cause for depression or melancholy. On the contrary we find that we are children of the universe and that the universe has produced us; or, to speak religiously, every one of the creatures of the universe is a child of God. And why should we therefore be alarmed at the idea that man is not original when we see that he is simply a child of the All from which he has sprung? This, it seems to me, is rather a cause for rejoicing than for a pessimistic outcry of despair. We will end our discussion of Mark Twain's philosophy in quoting a few lines from *De Rerum Natura*:

"Thus ever do a thousand subtle threads  
Me intertwine with that surrounding world  
Wherein I move. I contemplate the Vision:  
Of me it is a part. I am the All;  
Albeit that which into Self hath grown  
Is of the world a part: This bides, I pass.  
But lo! e'en then, in that which unto me  
The not-I seemed, I evermore endure."

EDITOR.